Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 RABAT 03342 172210Z

70
ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

NIC-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /129 W
---------- 024929
O P 171746Z JUL 74
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2584
INFO USINT ALGIERS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY
USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 588

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 3342

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR MO SP SS AG SA MR TS
SUBJECT: ARAB ATTITUDES ON SPANISH SAHARA ISSUE

1. DURING MY CALL JULY 17 ON SAUDI AMB EL-ARD, VICE DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND EXPERIENCED AND WELL CONNECTED IN RABAT, HE TOLD ME THAT SAG SUPPORTED MOROCCO'S POSITION UNQUALIFIEDLY. HE SAID HE HAD SEEN FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI AFTER LATTER'S RETURN FROM ALGERIA. LARAKI HAD TOLD HIM THAT BOUMEDIENE HAD ASSURED LARAKI THAT GOA HAD NO REPEAT NO TERRITORIAL CLAIM AND WOULD NOT CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS FOR MOROCCO IN PRESENT DISPUTE WITH SPAIN. LARAKI FURTHER TOLD SAUDI AMB THAT ALGERIA WOULD FAVOR NEITHER INDEPENDENT STATUS FOR SAHARA NOR WOULD IT TAKE ACTIVE ROLE IN SUPPORT OF MAURITANIA'S CLAIM. SAUDI AMB, HOWEVER, HAD IMPRESSION THAT, WHILE FIRST OF LARAKI'S
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 RABAT 03342 172210Z

STATEMENTS WAS DIRECT QUOTE FROM BOUMEDIENE, LATTER WAS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

INFERENCE WHICH LARAKI HAD DRAWN FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH BOUMEDIENE AND OTHER ALGERIAN OFFICIALS.

2. SAUDI AMB SAID HIS INTERPRETATION WAS THAT MAURITANIANS CANNOT BENEFIT GREATLY FROM ALGERIAN ATTITUDE AND THAT MAURITANIAN CLAIM NOT VERY STRONG ONE WITHOUT FIRM ALGERIAN SUPPORT. HE ALSO THOUGHT ARAB WORLD CONSIDERED THAT MOROCCO HAD BEEN REASONABLE TOWARD ITS NEIGHBORS AND HAD MADE CONCESSIONS BOTH TOWARD ALGERIA (BY CEDING TERRITORY) AND TO MAURITANIA (THROUGH DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION). THEREFORE, IN SAUDI AMB'S VIEW, ARABS COULD NOT NOW ASK MOROCCO TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS AND INDEED RECOGNIZED THAT MOROCCO WAS DETERMINED AGAINST SUCH CONCESSIONS.

3. SAUDI AMB WENT ON TO COMMENT THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN MOROCCO COULD NOT MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS VIS-A-VIS MAURITANIA, SUCH AS ACCEPTING PARTITION. HOWEVER, NO ARAB COUNTRIES COULD ACCEPT ANY POSITION WHICH IN ANY WAY MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS FAVORING SPANISH RETENTION OF THE SAHARA. SAUDI AMB, THEREFORE, CONCLUDED THAT SPAIN FACES UNITED ARAB OPPOSITION TO PRESENT SPANISH DELAYING TACTICS AND THAT SPAIN WOULD BE MOST UNWISE NOT TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION, ESPECIALLY AS SPAIN COULD COME TO APPPROPRIATE AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO REGARDING PROTECTION OF SPAIN'S ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS.

4. SAUDI AMB IS THEREFORE CONVINCED MOROCCAN PRESSURE WILL MOUNT UNTIL SPAIN SHOWS EVIDENCE OF CHANGING DELAYING TACTICS. SAUDI AMB COMMENTED THAT, BASED ON HIS CONTACTS WITH SIGNIFICANT MOROCCAN GROUPS, HE WAS COMPLETELY CONFIDENT THAT MOROCCANS WOULD NOT HOLD BACK FROM DIRECT AND/OR INDIRECT ARMED FORCE TO BRING THIS ISSUE TO A HEAD IF THEY FELT THERE WERE NO OTHER CHOICE. SAUDI AMB CONCLUDED THAT SAG AND OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAVE COME TO BELIEVE INDEPENDENT SAHARA NOT PRACTICAL OR VIABLE ALTERNATIVE. INDEPENDENT ENTITY COULD CAUSE TROUBLE AND ARAB STATES WANT ISSUE SETTLED TO FORESTALL FUTURE DIFFICULTIES.

5. KUWAITI AMB AL-MUDHAF ALSO CALLED ON ME JULY 17. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION REGARDING KUWAIT'S ATTITUDE ON MOROCCAN CLAIM TO SAHARA, KUWAITI SAID HIS GOVERNMENT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 RABAT 03342 172210Z

SUPPORTED MOROCCO'S POSITION. HE THEN FINESSED HIS STATEMENT BY SAYING SUPPORT UNQUALIFIED AS FAR AS DISPUTE BETWEEN MOROCCO AND SPAIN CONCERNED. IF THERE WERE TO BE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MOROCCO AND OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES, IT WAS KUWAIT'S HOPE THAT THESE COULD BE SETTLED AMICABLY BETWEEN THEM. EVEN IN THAT CASE, KUWAITI AMB STRESSED, KUWAIT'S POSITION WOULD FAVOR MOROCCO.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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6. EMBOFFS ALSO TALKED TO TUNISIAN COUNSELOR JULY 17. HE EMPHASIZED THAT, WHILE TUNISIANS HAVE NO DIFFICULTY SUPPORTING GOM ON LIBERATION OF SAHARA, THEY HAVE MUCH MORE TROUBLE WITH RESPECT TO MOROCCAN CLAIM TO REGION. HE SAID THAT COMMUNIQUES FOLLOWING RECENT BOURGUIBA AND CHATTI VISITS SPOKE OF TUNISIAN SUPPORT FOR MOROCCAN EFFORTS TO LIBERATE THESE REPEAT THESE TERRITORIES, WITHOUT SPECIFYING TO WHO TERRITORIES RIGHTFULLY BELONGED. MAIN TUNISIAN INTEREST IS IN CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF MAGHREB ENTENTE, AND THUS IN HAVING INTERESTED PARTIES WORK OUT ACCORD. HE NOTED THAT IDEA OF MAGHREB (MOROCCO, ALGERIA, TUNISIA AND MAURITANIA) MEETING EITHER IMMEDIATELY BEFORE OR AFTER ARAB SUMMIT HAD BEEN BROACHED, BUT STATUS OF THIS PROPOSAL NOT CLEAR.

7. TUNISIAN ALSO SAID FON MIN LARAKI LEAVING JULY 17 FOR TUNIS.
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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EO Systematic Review
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